

Application No. 10/775,076
Reply to Office Action of 07/11/2006

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

Claims 1, 4, 8, 10, 11, 18, 19 and 21-27 are presently pending. Claims 2-3, 5-7, 9, 12-17 and 20 are cancelled.

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of former claim 3, which has been indicated as being allowable by the Examiner in his last Office Action.

Claim 23 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of former claim 16 and former claim 15 on which former claim 16 was dependent. Former claim 16 had been indicated as being allowable in the Office Action of November 16, 2004. Allowability of claim 16 as an independent claim has been confirmed by the Examiner in a voice mail message to the agent of record left on November 11, 2006.

Claim 4 has been amended to remove "flexible" therefrom, such as to be consistent with the language of claim 23.

Claims 21-22 have been indicated as being allowable by the Examiner in his last Office Action.

Claims 8, 10 and 11 depend on allowable claim 1, and claims 4, 18, 19 and 24-27 depend on allowable claim 23.

Claim rejections – 35 U.S.C. §103

With respect to the rejection to claims 1, 4, 8, 10, 15, 18, 19 and 23-27 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Barker in view of Donovan, reconsideration by the Examiner is respectfully requested on the following grounds.

The Examiner has indicated that former claims 3 and 16 were allowable over Barker and Donovan. As amended claim 1 now includes the subject matter of former claim 3, and amended claim 23 now includes the subject matter of former claim 16, it is therefore submitted that at least independent claims 1 and 23 recite structure which is patentably distinct from Barker and Donovan in combination, and thus that independent claims 1 and 23 are both novel and inventive thereover.

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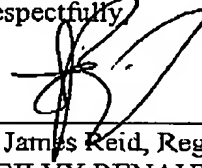
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At least in view of their dependence on claims 1 or 23, dependent claims 4, 8, 10, 15, 18, 19 and 24-27 are similarly both novel and inventive over the cited references. Reconsideration of the rejection of claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) is therefore respectfully requested.

Allowance of all pending claims at an early date is respectfully solicited.

In the event that there are any questions concerning this amendment or the application in general, the Examiner is respectfully urged to telephone the undersigned so that prosecution of this application may be expedited.

Respectfully



November 13, 2006

Date

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CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this paper is being facsimile transmitted to the United States Patent and Trademark Office on the date shown below.

T. James Reid, Reg. No. 56,498

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November 13, 2006

Date